

At the time of writing five countries* have already abolished Morse code testing as a requirement for all grades of amateur radio licence, even though less than three months have elapsed since the change in ITU s25.5. The Netherlands will follow on September 1st, and New Zealand before the end of 2003. The CEPT will meet in September, and it is likely that Morse code test will be removed as a requirement for reciprocal operation in CEPT member states, after which far more CEPT member states are expected to abolish Morse code testing internally. It is high time the USA did the same.

The FCC is on record as saying that Morse code testing serves no regulatory purpose. Furthermore, one of the reasons often given for retaining such a test was the use of Morse code in the Maritime service, which was completely phased out by 2000.

I propose that the FCC should abolish Element 1 and give all Technician class licencees access to the frequency privileges of the Technician Plus licence. Preferably, in addition, all Novice and Advanced class operators should be grandfathered to the next higher class of licence.

*Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Germany and Norway